

FISH and WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 8, 2016

Agenda Item: Wildlife Management Area Biennial Public Use Rules

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Proposed

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 Min

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Background

Public use rules for Wildlife Management Areas, Wildlife Habitat Protection Areas, and Fisheries Conservation Areas are adopted by the F&W Commission on a biennial schedule. FWP is recommending retaining existing rules with one edit and one addition. A copy of the proposed rules with highlighted and underlined edits is part of the Commission packet. The first proposed edit is to eliminate Osprey View Fisheries Conservation Area as one of the exceptions for year round accessibility. This edit would make the property open to year round access which is compatible with the property's habitat values. The second is an additional rule pertaining to drones and similar remotely controlled vehicles. The addition would prohibit the use of these vehicles except as authorized in writing by the regional wildlife manager for educational value or other public benefit. The purpose for such a restriction is to avoid potential impacts such vehicles can have on habitat function and wildlife distribution and behavior.

Public Involvement Process & Results

Upon tentative approval, the public use rules would be available for public review and comment. The Commission would take final action in February 2017.

Alternatives and Analysis

The package of rules adopted in February 2015 as well as the proposed edits may be modified or added to based on public comment and Commission direction.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends the Commission provide tentative approval of the proposed rules, allowing for further public review. The function of these rules, as described therein, is to "protect fish and wildlife habitat, wildlife presence on WMAs, and public use of the WMAs, including but not limited to fishing, trapping and hunting opportunities. All other uses are secondary and must be in accord with the primary goals and objectives of the wildlife management areas."

Proposed Motion

I move the Fish and Wildlife Commission provide tentative approval of the public use rules as proposed.